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## SAMOA

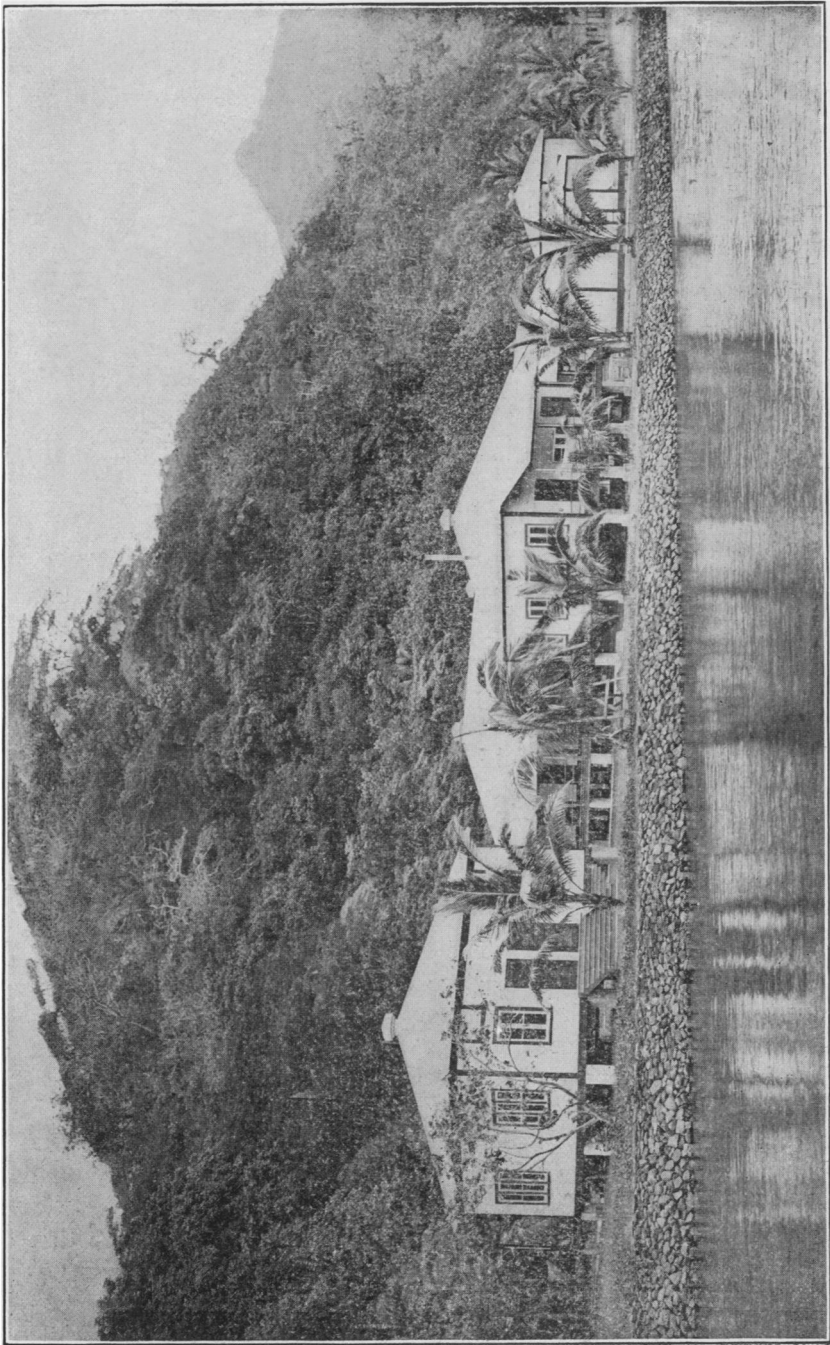
By M. H.

When given our orders for duty in Samoa we experienced that feeling of futility which overcomes one when a great project is suddenly unfolded. We had such short notice, our preparations kept us very much occupied and the reality of leaving kindred and friends for the isolation of a sojourn in Samoa did not impress us until we were beyond the point of recall.

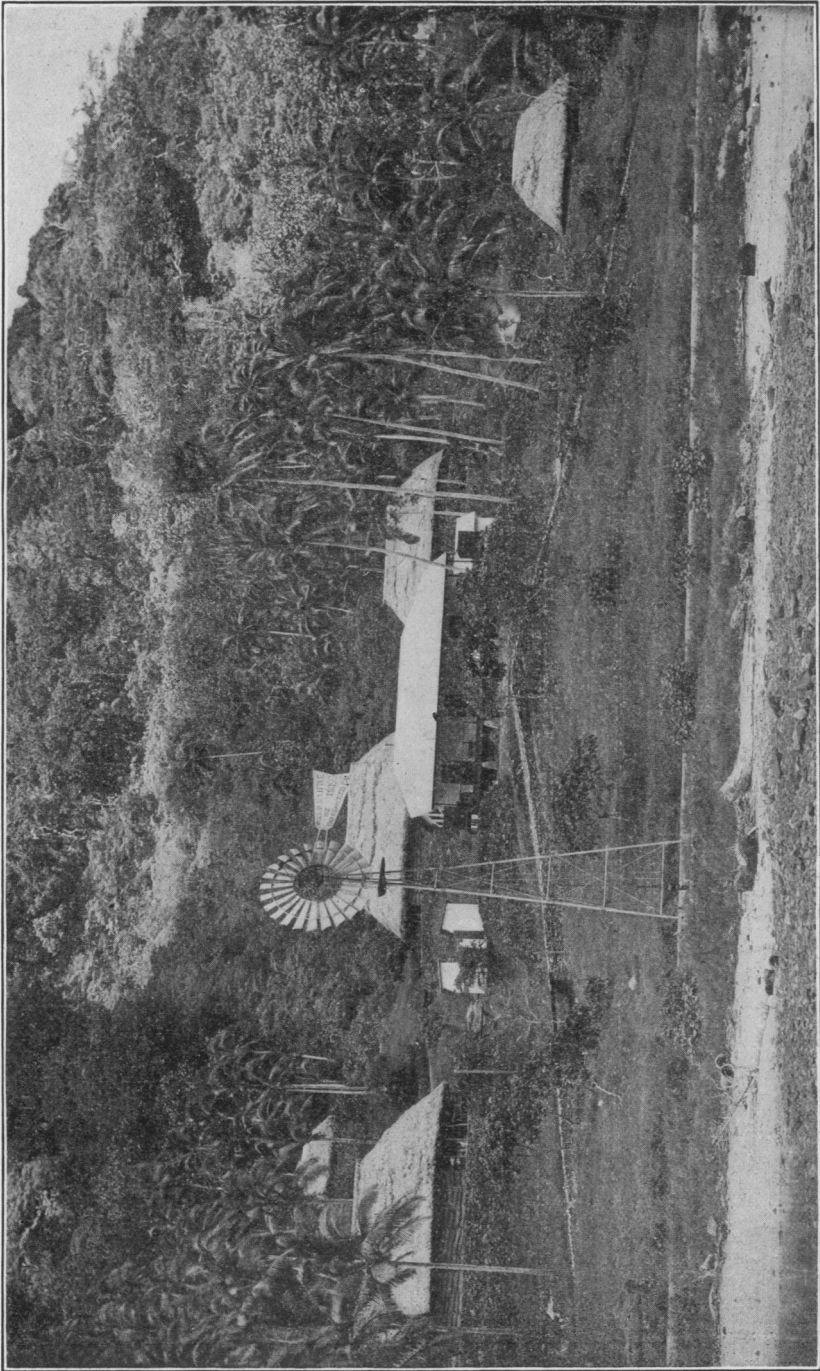
Although the island authorities had officially requested that nurses be sent to Samoa, they were not prepared for the unusually quick response. One accepts the fact that the Government moves slowly, as become a large dignified body, whose girth has increased and whose center of speed has not proportionately quickened. There are times, however, when a spurt carries this body ahead of those who supply the impetus and our arrival noted such a time. The ship, which had given us a delightful passage, made an inauspicious landing and we were not put on shore until late at night instead of at full noon. As no quarters were ready for us, the Governor, who is the official host of the island, extended to us the hospitality of the executive dwelling for the night. Realizing the dismay which must have been experienced when two women, whose names, professional standing and qualifications were entirely unknown quantities, descended upon the little colony, we have reason to be thankful for the cosmopolitan training which enables navy people to appear cheerful in the face of difficulties and we appreciate the treatment we have received just as such treatment should be appreciated.

The following day we were installed in temporary quarters at the Naval Hospital and this installation tested our ability to "make the best of things as they are." The space in which two large women were required to settle and dispose of their necessary paraphernalia was disconcertingly small but the comfort of adjacent bath-room and toilet compensated for close quarters. We have the use of the kitchen and dining room intended for the sick officer patients and our meals are sent from a general mess about a block from the hospital. The food could be worse but we feel that it can be improved and when we are located in the quarters which are intended for our own use, we shall be able to make many changes.

Our work is to be at the Samoan Hospital without any connection with the Naval Dispensary. In addition we will have the nursing of acute illness in the American Colony and the work which we are anticipating as being the most interesting, namely, the professional training



THE UNITED STATES NAVAL DISPENSARY, SAMOA



THE SAMOAN HOSPITAL

of the native women. The hospital is supported by contributions from the Samoans, the Government being responsible only for the personnel.

To date, our actual nursing work has been confined to the babies. They are particularly subject to acute intestinal disorders and there are many ill with broncho-pneumonia. The feeding of these little ones is a problem. We not only have to contend with a dearth of supplies and equipment but we have to, tactfully and in sign language, direct the care of the mothers.

Mrs. H., the wife of an English missionary, stopped here on her way from one of the remote stations. She and her husband have been working nine years in the Samoan (German) Islands and speak the native language fluently. Of course, her knowledge of the people made advice from her very desirable. For further information the Medical Officer gave me three days' leave and I accompanied her to Labone, some sixteen miles by water, where Mr. and Mrs. H. conduct a school for girls. My visit was enlightening. The women seem very gentle and are obedient but I realize there is a long period between civilization as indicated by these people and by those of Guam and Philippine Islands. Mrs. H. was not encouraging with regard to the young women taking the training but believes we may be successful with women who have passed the age of child-bearing. She warned me that any promise made by the natives would be fulfilled only so long as their fleeting fancy was held. I talked to the girls of the school, Mr. H. acting as interpreter. They listened with stolid interest but the idea is too new for an appeal and no one promised to enter our training school.

My return to the American station by water was rendered impossible by a high wind and rough sea. It was suggested that I should ride. Never having been on horse back I hesitated but as walking fourteen miles was the alternative I accepted the mount. A little native boy led the hard-mouthed old white horse, who should have been safe since he had such an unattractive appearance. He did not approve of me, however, and tried all manner of tricks to rid himself of his burden. Bucking accomplished the purpose and after two more vain efforts to avail myself of his help, I gave up the struggle and walked, arriving at the station after five hours, weary beyond words. I might mention that this experience was rendered more memorable by a pouring rain. The road was a tropical wonder, very beautiful even in the rain and when I recovered from my fatigue, I enjoyed the experience and even laughed heartily at my tilt with the old white horse.

Our course here will be harder, in that we shall have to learn, by

stern experience, that which is taught in the schools of philanthropy and outlined in our special college courses; and our professional desires must be leashed to conform with the conditions which are far more primitive than can be imagined or described. We shall have much to learn but at this stage I feel that we have even more to unlearn. I am reminded of that very successful visiting nurse who stated at one of our conventions, "my success began when I had banished every one of my hard-learned hospital theories and got down to bed-rock humanity." We shall need encouragement, for our lives will be very lonely with no companionship; but already we feel we are building and no matter how slowly we build, each day some experience is gained, some weakness overcome or eradicated. In my next letter I shall be able to write of our actual work and, I hope, of our training school.

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#### HEALTH CONSERVATION AT THE PANAMA-PACIFIC EXPOSITION

The most pressing problems of today and of tomorrow, the problems of human welfare, furnish the basis not only of a large proportion of the 60,000 exhibits which already have been secured to fill the 65 acres of the eleven vast exhibit palaces, but of the laboratory and platform work of most of the extraordinary series of national and international congresses and conventions which will make San Francisco their headquarters in 1915. Fully 500 such great gatherings are expected to hold sessions there; and of these, 221 already have voted to be present.

From the Editorial Bureau

Panama-Pacific International Exposition